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**PRESIDENT**  
Mary Ellen Petrisko

July 8, 2016

Dr. Elliot Hirshman  
President  
San Diego State University  
5500 Campanile Drive  
San Diego, CA 92182-8000

Dear President Hirshman:

This letter serves as formal notification and official record of action taken concerning San Diego State University (SDSU) by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) at its meeting June 22-24, 2016. This action was taken after consideration of the report of the review team that conducted the Accreditation Visit to SDSU March 21-24, 2016. The Commission also reviewed the institutional report and exhibits submitted by SDSU prior to the Offsite Review (OSR), the supplemental materials requested by the team after the OSR and the institution's May 31, 2016 response to the team report. The Commission appreciated the opportunity to discuss the visit with you and Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies and ALO Stephen Schellenberg. Your comments were very helpful in informing the Commission's deliberations. The date of this action constitutes the effective date of the institution's new status with WSCUC.

### **Actions**

1. Receive the Accreditation Visit team report
2. Reaffirm accreditation for a period of ten years
3. Schedule the next reaffirmation review with the Offsite Review in fall 2025 and the Accreditation Visit in spring 2026
4. Schedule the Mid-Cycle Review in spring 2021

### **Commendations**

The Commission joins with the team in commending San Diego State University for the following:

1. The deep dedication of faculty, staff, administrators, and student leadership to collaboration and transparency and to working in partnership to lead student success
2. Improvements in retention and graduation rates while increasing the diversity of the student body and closing achievement gaps
3. Development of a comprehensive strategic plan with broad participation from university stakeholders

4. Remarkable success in fundraising
5. Capital improvements designed to strengthen student success, particularly the facilities for addressing the needs of commuter students
6. Maintaining a high volume of research grants and contracts in a very competitive national environment
7. Astute financial management to maintain the quality of the university while mitigating the deep cuts in state appropriations
8. Implementation of an integrated program of high impact practices, including undergraduate research and study abroad, and adopting policies that require these experiences for undergraduates
9. Outreach to underserved local communities.

## **Recommendations**

The Commission identifies the following issues for further development:

1. Review the general education program to (a) strengthen its alignment with institutional goals, (b) enhance its integration into the overall curriculum, (c) improve understanding among students as to its purposes, and (d) create an effective infrastructure to support coordination across academic programs (CFR 2.2a). The Commission is pleased to learn that SDSU will be re-examining the general education curriculum, course options, and the experience for students.
2. Develop or strengthen systems, organizational relationships, and governance infrastructure involved in both information technology and data management such that faculty and staff have ready access to reliable and consistent information and shared analytical tools – perhaps via a data warehouse – that can enhance student success (CFRs 1.2, 3.5, 4.2). The Commission is pleased to learn that a working group led by the CIO will be reviewing enterprise and data management systems and will make recommendations for improvement as needed.
3. Develop, via an appropriately consultative process, a plan for allocating faculty and staff positions to address multiple and competing needs, among them: a commitment to student success; the enhancement of diversity; support of existing graduate programs; and the development of new initiatives. Enhance efforts to retain faculty and staff through professional development opportunities (CFRs 3.1, 3.2, 3.3).
4. Sustain and enhance progress in the assessment of educational effectiveness through the development of a manageable process of assessment:
  - a. Prioritize outcomes of greatest concern to the campus, for example, underrepresented student success, student success in courses with high rates of D's, F's, or Withdrawals, and the quality of high-impact practices.
  - b. Facilitate the full participation of all units and programs in the assessment process, including general education, graduate programs, and the Imperial Valley Campus.

- c. Establish a platform (WEAVE or an alternative) that documents outcomes, results, and actions taken, that makes expectations and outcomes explicit and public, and that facilitates sharing (CFRs 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.3, 2.4, 4.2).

In taking this action to reaffirm accreditation, the Commission confirms that San Diego State University has addressed the three Core Commitments and has successfully completed the two-stage institutional review process conducted under the 2013 Standards of Accreditation. Between this action and the time of the next review for reaffirmation, the institution is encouraged to continue its progress, particularly with respect to student learning and success.

In accordance with Commission policy, a copy of this letter will be sent to the chair of SDSU's governing board in one week. A copy of this letter will also be sent to the Chancellor of the California State University system. The Commission expects that the team report and this action letter will be posted in a readily accessible location on the SDSU website and widely distributed throughout the institution to promote further engagement and improvement and to support the institution's response to the specific issues identified in these documents. The team report and the Commission's action letter will also be posted on the WSCUC website. If the institution wishes to respond to the Commission action on its own website, WSCUC will post a link to that response on the WSCUC website.

Finally, the Commission wishes to express its appreciation for the extensive work that San Diego State University undertook in preparing for and supporting this accreditation review. WSCUC is committed to an accreditation process that adds value to institutions while contributing to public accountability, and we thank you for your continued support of this process. Please contact me if you have any questions about this letter or the action of the Commission.

Sincerely,



Mary Ellen Petrisko  
President

MEP/ bgd

Cc: William Ladusaw, Commission Chair  
Stephen Schellenberg, ALO  
Rebecca Eisen, Board Chair  
Timothy White, Chancellor  
Members of the Accreditation Visit team  
Barbara Gross Davis, Vice President